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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
✓Agricultural Research Service  
✓Human Nutrition Research Branch  
Washington 25, D. C.

Food Plans at Low and Moderate Cost 1/



1/ Interim revision of plans in Helping Families Plan Food Budgets,  
Fisc. Pub. 662.

Source: Rural Family Living, Human Nutrition Research Branch,  
U. S. Dept. Agr., March 1955.



Table 2.--Estimated Cost of one Week's Food, 1/ December 1954

Age and activity groups	Low-cost adequate diet	Moderate-cost adequate diet
	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>Dollars</u>
<u>FAMILIES</u>		
Family of two 2/.....	13.00	16.00
Family of four with preschool children 3/.....	18.00	22.00
Family of four, school age children 4/.....	21.00	26.00
<u>INDIVIDUALS</u>		
Children:		
1-3 years.....	3.00	3.50
4-6 years.....	3.50	4.25
7-9 years.....	4.25	5.25
Girls, 10-12 years.....	5.00	5.75
13-15 years.....	5.25	6.25
16-20 years.....	5.25	6.25
Boys, 10-12 years.....	5.25	6.00
13-15 years.....	6.25	7.50
16-20 years.....	6.75	8.25
Women:		
Sedentary.....	5.00	5.75
Moderately active.....	5.25	6.50
Very active.....	6.00	7.75
Pregnant.....	6.25	7.50
Nursing.....	7.75	8.75
60 years or over.....	4.75	5.75
Men:		
Sedentary.....	5.25	6.50
Physically active.....	6.00	7.75
With heavy work.....	7.50	9.50
60 years or over.....	5.25	6.25
Per capita.....	5.25	6.50

1/ These estimates were computed from quantities in low- and moderate-cost food plans, tables 3 and 4, with prices from "Average Retail Prices of Food in 46 Large Cities Combined" released periodically by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Estimates for individuals have been rounded to nearest .25, and for families to the nearest dollar.

2/ Physically active man and sedentary woman. 20 percent added for small families.

3/ Phys. active man; moderately active woman; children, 1-3 and 4-6 years.

4/ Phys. active man; mod. active woman; children, 7-9 and 10-12 years.



## Revised Food Budget Quantities and Estimates of Food Costs

Food plan quantities have been published for more than 20 years by the Department of Agriculture and are used by many groups in administrative programs, in educational work, and by families in developing their own plans for food purchase and production.

Because these plans take account of the recommendations of nutrition research, food habits, and food costs, revisions are needed from time to time. The most recent complete revision was in 1948.<sup>4/</sup> In recent years the Recommended Dietary Allowances of the National Research Council have been used as the nutritional basis of the food plans. In 1953, the National Research Council recommended a lower calcium allowance for adults. Tables 3 and 4, which present food plan quantities for different age groups at two cost levels, take account of this change. Other minor adjustments have also been made.

Food plan quantities are the bases of cost estimates included regularly in this publication (table 2). Prices used in making these estimates are averages for 46 large cities, obtained from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The estimates given in table 2 are based on the quantities in tables 3 and 4. In addition to the changes in quantities, the kinds of foods considered in computing cost have been revised since this table was last published. These changes make little difference in the cost estimates for the moderate-cost plan, but raise the estimates about 10 percent, on the average, for the low-cost plan.

The lowered calcium recommendation results in slightly lower cost estimates for adults. However, the revision in kinds of food priced and weights used in making the estimates has an opposite effect. For example, the cost of the group "meat, poultry, and fish" will obviously depend on the specific kinds of meat, poultry, and fish priced and the division of the total poundage among them. The weights used have been derived from food consumption surveys, using data for low- and moderate-income families.<sup>5/</sup> Over the past decade differences among income groups in the kinds and quantities of foods consumed have lessened. Therefore, it is not surprising that the new weights, based on more up-to-date consumption patterns, result in greater cost increases for the food plan typical of low-income consumption than for the plan for moderate-income families.

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<sup>4/</sup> Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics. Helping Families Plan Food Budgets. U. S. Department of Agriculture MP 662. 1952. 16 pp.

<sup>5/</sup> Tables giving these weights are available on request.



Table 3

FOOD PLAN AT MODERATE COST: Weekly quantities of food (as purchased) for 19 age, sex, and activity groups

Family members	Leafy, green, and yellow vege- tables	Citrus fruit, toma- toes	Pota- toes, sweetpo- tatoes	Other vege- tables and fruit	Milk 1/	Meat, poul- try, fish	Eggs	Dry beans and peas, nuts	Flour, cereals 2/	Fats and oils 3/	Sugar, sirups, pre- serves
	Lb. Oz.	Lb. Oz.	Lb. Oz.	Lb. Oz.	Qt.	Lb. Oz.	No.	Lb. Oz.	Lb. Oz.	Lb. Oz.	Lb. Oz.
Children:											
1-3 years.....	1--12	1--12	1-- 0	1--12	5½	0--12	6	0-- 1	1-- 4	0-- 2	0-- 2
4-6 years.....	2-- 0	2-- 0	1-- 4	2-- 0	6	1-- 4	7	0-- 1	1-- 8	0-- 6	0-- 8
7-9 years.....	2-- 4	2-- 4	2-- 0	2-- 8	6	1--12	7	0-- 2	2-- 0	0-- 8	0--12
Girls, 10-12 years....	2-- 3	2--12	2-- 0	2-- 8	5	2-- 4	7	0-- 2	2-- 8	0--12	0--12
13-15 years.....	3-- 0	2--12	2-- 4	2--12	6	2--12	7	0-- 2	2--12	0--12	0--12
16-20 years.....	3-- 0	2--12	2-- 0	2--12	6	2--12	7	0-- 2	2-- 8	0--12	0--12
Boys, 10-12 years....	2-- 8	2--12	2-- 8	2-- 8	5	2-- 4	7	0-- 4	3-- 0	0--12	0--14
13-15 years.....	3-- 8	3-- 0	3-- 8	3-- 4	6½	3-- 0	7	0-- 4	4-- 0	1-- 2	1-- 2
16-20 years.....	3--12	3-- 4	4-- 8	3-- 4	6½	3-- 4	7	0-- 4	5-- 0	1-- 6	1-- 4
Women:											
Sedentary.....	2-- 8	2-- 8	1--12	2-- 8	4	2-- 8	7	0-- 1	1--12	0--10	0--10
Moderately active...	3-- 0	2-- 8	2-- 8	3-- 4	4	2--12	7	0-- 2	2-- 8	0--12	0--12
Very active.....	3--12	3-- 0	3-- 8	4-- 0	4	3-- 0	7	0-- 4	3--12	1-- 2	1-- 2
Pregnant.....	3-- 8	3-- 8	2-- 4	3-- 0	7	3-- 0	7	0-- 2	2-- 4	0--10	0--10
Nursing.....	4-- 0	4-- 8	3-- 0	3-- 8	10	3-- 0	7	0-- 2	2-- 8	0--12	0--12
60 years or over....	2--12	2--12	1--12	2-- 8	4	2-- 8	6	0-- 1	1--12	0-- 8	0-- 8
Men:											
Sedentary.....	3-- 0	2-- 8	2-- 8	3-- 4	4	2--12	7	0-- 2	2-- 8	0--12	0--12
Physically active...	3--12	3-- 0	3-- 8	4-- 0	4	3-- 0	7	0-- 4	3--12	1-- 2	1-- 2
With heavy work....	3--12	3-- 8	5-- 0	4-- 8	4	3-- 4	7	0-- 6	7-- 0	2-- 0	1-- 8
60 years or over....	2--12	2--12	2--12	2-- 8	4	2--12	6	0-- 2	2-- 8	0--12	0--12

1/ Or its equivalent in cheese, evaporated milk, dry milk, or ice cream.

2/ Count 1½ pounds of bread as 1 pound of flour. Use as much as possible in the form of whole grain, enriched, or restored products.

3/ For small children and pregnant and nursing women, cod liver oil or some other source of vitamin D is also needed. For elderly persons and for persons who have no opportunity for exposure to clear sunshine, a small amount of vitamin D is also desirable.



Table 4

## FOOD PLAN AT LOW COST: Weekly quantities of food (as purchased) for 19 age, sex, and activity groups

Family members	Leafy, green, and yellow vege- tables	Citrus fruit, toma- toes	Pota- toes, sweetpo- tatoes	Other vege- tables and fruit	Milk 1/	Meat, poul- try, fish		Dry beans and peas, nuts	Flour, cereals 2/	Fats and oils 3/	Sugar, sirups, pre- serves
	Lb. Oz.	Lb. Oz.	Lb. Oz.	Lb. Oz.	Qt.	Lb. Oz.	No.	Lb. Oz.	Lb. Oz.	Lb. Oz.	Lb. Oz.
<b>Children:</b>											
1-3 years.....	1--12	1--12	1-- 0	1-- 0	5	0-- 8	5	0-- 1	1-- 4	0-- 2	0-- 2
4-6 years.....	1--12	1--12	1-- 8	1-- 4	5	1-- 0	5	0-- 2	1--12	0-- 6	0-- 6
7-9 years.....	2-- 0	2-- 0	2-- 8	1-- 8	5	1-- 8	5	0-- 4	2-- 4	0-- 8	0--10
Girls, 10-12 years...	2-- 4	2-- 4	2-- 8	1--12	6	1--12	5	0-- 4	2-- 8	0--12	0--10
13-15 years.....	2-- 4	2-- 4	3-- 0	1--12	6	2-- 0	5	0-- 4	3-- 0	0--12	0--10
16-20 years.....	2-- 4	2-- 4	2--12	1--12	6	4/ 2-- 0	5	0-- 4	2--12	0--12	0--10
Boys, 10-12 years....	2-- 4	2-- 4	3-- 0	1--12	6	2-- 0	5	0-- 4	3-- 0	0--12	0--10
13-15 years.....	2-- 8	2-- 8	4-- 0	2-- 4	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	2-- 0	5	0-- 8	4-- 4	1-- 0	0--14
16-20 years.....	2--12	2-- 8	5-- 0	2-- 8	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	2-- 0	5	0-- 8	5-- 8	1-- 6	1-- 0
<b>Women:</b>											
Sedentary.....	2-- 4	2-- 0	2-- 4	1--12	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	2-- 0	5	0-- 4	2-- 0	0--10	0--10
Moderately active..	2-- 4	2-- 0	2--12	1--12	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	2-- 0	5	0-- 4	3-- 4	0--12	0--12
Very active.....	2-- 8	2-- 8	3--12	2-- 4	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	2-- 0	5	0-- 6	4-- 0	1-- 0	1-- 0
Pregnant.....	3-- 0	2-- 8	2-- 8	2-- 0	7	2-- 4	7	0-- 4	2-- 8	0--10	0-- 8
Nursing.....	3-- 8	3--12	4-- 0	2-- 4	10	2-- 8	7	0-- 4	3-- 0	0--10	0-- 8
60 years or over..	2-- 8	2-- 4	2-- 4	1--12	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	2-- 0	4	0-- 2	2-- 0	0-- 8	0-- 8
<b>Men:</b>											
Sedentary.....	2-- 4	2-- 0	2--12	1--12	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	2-- 0	5	0-- 4	3-- 4	0--12	0--12
Physically active..	2-- 8	2-- 8	3--12	2-- 4	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	2-- 0	5	0-- 6	4-- 0	1-- 0	1-- 0
With heavy work....	2-- 8	2-- 8	5-- 8	2--12	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	2-- 0	5	0--10	7-- 0	1--14	1-- 0
60 years and over..	2-- 8	2-- 4	3-- 4	1--12	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	2-- 0	4	0-- 2	3-- 4	0--10	0--10

1/ Or its equivalent in cheese, evaporated milk, dry milk, or ice cream.

2/ Count 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  pounds of bread as 1 pound of flour. Use as much as possible in the form of whole-grain, enriched, or restored products.

3/ For small children and pregnant and nursing women, cod liver oil or some other source of vitamin D is also needed. For elderly persons and for persons who have no opportunity for exposure to clear sunshine, a small amount of vitamin D is also desirable.

4/ To meet iron allowance, 1 large serving of liver or other organ meats should be served each week.





